

Ed Mahern

State Representative

District 97



How To Reach
Representative

Ed Mahern

RESIDENCE

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**ANSWER THE
QUESTIONNAIRE ONLINE**

www.state.in.us/R97

Fall, 1999

Dear Friends,

Autumn is here and the General Assembly will meet for Organization Day on Tuesday, November 16. We will consider a package of bills that week, including an economic development package that would benefit many Hoosiers throughout the state.

The 2000 session is a "short" session, meaning we will begin session January 10 and finish before March 15.

In the short session, each House member may introduce only five pieces of legislation. While we will not re-open the two-year state budget passed earlier this year, the possibility remains that we may fine-tune some of the appropriations outlined in that legislation.

Inside this newsletter is my legislative questionnaire. The questions will provide some details about the topics that may be brought before the legislature. Your opinion is valuable to me as I consider how I will vote.

If you have any concerns or suggestions for change in your state government, please contact me at 232-9600.

Sincerely,



2000 Page Program

Serving as a page during the 2000 session allows any child age 13 or older the opportunity to gain a firsthand glimpse of how the legislative system works. Students will be excused from school on the day they are serving as a page and will spend the entire day at the Statehouse.

Interested students should send me their name, parent or guardian's name, address, phone number, school and two different dates when the student could come to the Statehouse between January 10 and February 29, 2000.

Please remember session is short and places fill up fast, so apply as soon as possible.

Our mission is to create an environment for Indiana's youth that is conducive to both fun and learning, and which will stimulate student interest in government and community involvement. To that end, we plan to educate students regarding legislative processes; to give students an opportunity to meet their community leaders; to encourage student involvement in the community; and to introduce students to other students around the state.

Reassessment -- *how will it affect you?*

Last December the State Supreme Court ruled that the property assessment guidelines used in the collection of property taxes were unconstitutional because different types of property were not treated equitably. The Court mandates the State Tax Board to develop new guidelines based on “objectively verifiable data.”

I supported a bill to delay the reassessment. This would have allowed the board time to work out a good program. This also would have given the legislature time to review the guidelines and ease the shift to reassessment.

The reassessment will not increase the money generated by property taxes; it merely shifts the burden among taxpayers. While one taxpayer may see an increase, another taxpayer will have a decrease. I will do everything I can to ease the burden for homeowners.

The new assessment guidelines, mandated by the Indiana Supreme Court, will affect property tax bills starting in 2002. Older homes will most likely see the largest increases. The guidelines are based on “market-value assessments.”

In Marion County residential taxpayers may see a 1.4 percent increase. Businesses may see a 1.1 percent decrease and utilities may see a 2.3 percent increase.

I am working to find alternative approaches which will ease the burden for homeowners. The State Tax Board has discussed several options, including phasing in the property tax increases, rather than raising them all at once. I intend to do all I can to lower the property tax burden for homeowners.



Rep. Mahern discusses legislation with Gov. Frank O'Bannon.

Educating our children

Did you know that more than 20 percent of adults read at or below a fifth grade level – far below the level needed to earn a living wage? Forty-three percent of people with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty.

The Indiana General Assembly has attempted to help by appropriating \$3.9 million in funding for early intervention (K-3) reading programs. The General Assembly also provided \$6 million to replace old and worn school library books and materials.

If you know of anyone who would like to obtain a GED, needs reading help for their child, needs reading help for themselves, wants to learn English as a Second Language, wants to improve their employment options or who wants to go from welfare to work, contact the Literacy Helpline at 1-800-267-9029. The helpline is part of the Indiana Literacy Foundation.

The Indiana Literacy Foundation sponsors statewide programs to encourage people to read. Reach Out and Read (ROAR) is a pediatric literacy initiative to help infants and children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years discover the joys of reading. Developed by pediatricians at Boston Medical Center, ROAR recruits volunteers to conduct reading circles at health facilities. Doctors “prescribe” reading to their young patients, each of whom receives a brand new book after each well care visit.

Statistics: National Institute for Literacy

How are we doing?

| | Indiana | U.S. |
|-----------------------------|---------|------|
| High School Graduation Rate | 87.9% | 82% |
| College Attendance Rate | 53.5% | 41% |
| SAT Composite Score | 981 | 1013 |

2000 Legislative Survey

Questions

1. Should the state of Indiana eliminate the ISTEP program for testing students, and come up with another method of gauging progress in the classroom?
2. Do you believe the Indiana General Assembly should create a permanent commission to set salaries for elected officials, including the governor and members of the Legislature?
3. Should changes be made in state laws that would make Indiana riverboats more competitive with those in surrounding states?
4. Do you support passage of legislation that would allow people to have their names placed on a list that would prohibit telemarketers from calling them?
5. Should the Legislature delay the implementation of new property assessment guidelines created by the State Board of Tax Commissioners that will shift the property tax burden to homeowners when they take effect?
6. Indiana presently ranks 48th in the nation in the amount of benefits provided to workers injured while on the job. Should injured workers be compensated at higher rates?
7. Do you believe that people have the right to hold their health maintenance organizations (HMOs) legally responsible for the health care decisions they make?
8. Do you believe that patients should be able to receive drugs prescribed by their doctors without approval from their HMOs?
9. Should the state of Indiana provide funding to school corporations that choose to offer a full day of kindergarten?

Responses

| | <i>Respondent 1</i> | | <i>Respondent 2</i> | |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

Your Comments

Place
Stamp
Here

Rep. Ed Mahern
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Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

House Publications Available

The following publications can be requested free of charge from my Statehouse office by calling 232-9600:

Relax . . . -- This informational booklet for senior citizens discusses a variety of issues, from taxes to health problems to leisure activities.

Higher Education -- A 24-page publication for those interested in pursuing a higher education degree, detailing many Indiana colleges and universities as well as occupational and vocational schools.

Guide to State Agencies -- This booklet details various agencies within Indiana state government, listing phone numbers, functions and general areas of responsibility for each of the state agencies.

Hoosier Fun and Facts -- Designed for elementary school-aged children, this information and activity book teaches students about their state through a combination of text, puzzles and other educational activities.

Is the address label on this mailing correct?

Please check the address label on this mailing for accuracy. If there are any errors or if you are receiving duplicate mailings, please contact my office at 232-9600. Every effort will be made to correct the mistake.

I appreciate your assistance in keeping the mailing list updated. This will ultimately result in more efficient delivery and substantial savings to taxpayers across the state.

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